



California Department of Veterans Affairs

VETERANS NEWS

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NEWS FROM THE CALIFORNIA GOVERNORS OFFICE

GOVERNOR ISSUES STATEMENTS ON DEATHS OF MILITARY PERSONNEL



1/28/08

Gov. Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Orange Soldier: Pfc. Brandon A. Meyer

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Pfc. Brandon A. Meyer of Orange, CA:

"Private First Class Brandon Meyer devoted himself to serving his country with honor, bravery and integrity. The people of California will never forget his selfless commitment to the United States. Maria and I extend our thoughts and prayers to Brandon's family, friends and fellow soldiers during this difficult time."

Meyer, 20, died Jan. 28 as a result of wounds suffered when his unit encountered an improvised explosive device during convoy operations in Mosul, Iraq. Meyer was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, and 4th Infantry Division, United States Army, Fort Carson, CO.

In honor of Pfc. Meyer, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



01/11/08

Gov. Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of San Marcos Soldier

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Pfc. Ivan E. Merlo, of San Marcos, CA:

"Maria and I are forever grateful to those who make the commitment to defend America in our nation's armed forces. Private First Class Ivan Merlo accepted this valiant duty with courage and bravery. During this difficult time, our continued prayers are with Ivan's family, friends and fellow soldiers."

Merlo, 19, died Jan. 8 as a result of wounds sustained during combat operations in Samarra, Iraq. Merlo

was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), United States Army, Fort Campbell, KY. The incident is under investigation.

In honor of Pfc. Merlo, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



01/11/08

Gov. Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Lake View Terrace Soldier

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Sgt. David J. Hart, of Lake View Terrace, CA:

"The loss of Sergeant David Hart is deeply felt by the community of Lake View Terrace and all Californians. Maria and I extend our heartfelt sympathies to his family and loved ones as they grieve the loss of a brave soldier and a true hero. David's legacy of service and dedication to our country will be proudly remembered by all who knew him."

Hart, 22, died Jan. 8 in Balad, Iraq as a result of wounds sustained during combat operations in Samarra, Iraq. Hart was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), United States Army, Fort Campbell, KY. The incident is under investigation.

In honor of Sgt. Hart, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



01/10/08

Gov. Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Hesperia Soldier: Sgt. James K. Healy

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Sgt. James K. Healy, of Hesperia, CA:

"Maria and I stand with all Californians in honoring Sergeant James Healy for his service in the United States Army. James will be remembered as a protector of freedom and a patriot of our country. Maria and I are deeply saddened by this loss and we wish to extend our thoughts and prayers to his family."

Healy, 25, died Jan. 7 at Jalalabad Airfield, Afghanistan as a result of wounds suffered when his vehicle struck an improvised explosive device in Laghar Juy, Afghanistan. Healy was assigned to the 703rd Explosive Ordnance Detachment, United States Army, Fort Knox, KY.

In honor of Sgt. Healy, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



12/28/07

Gov. Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Bakersfield Soldier: Sgt. Benjamin B. Portell

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Sgt.

Benjamin B. Portell, of Bakersfield, CA:

"Standing with his fellow soldiers, Sergeant Benjamin Portell proudly defended our country overseas. Maria and I extend our sympathies and prayers to his family and friends in this time of mourning. All Californians owe Benjamin a debt of gratitude for his courageous service to our nation."

Portell, 27, died Dec. 26 as a result of wounds suffered from small arms fire during dismounted combat operations in Mosul, Iraq. Portell was assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, III Corps, United States Army, Fort Hood, TX.

In honor of Sgt. Portell, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



12/26/07

Gov. Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Sanger Airman: Senior Airman Nicholas D. Eischen

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Senior Airman Nicholas D. Eischen, of Sanger, CA:

"As a member of our nation's armed forces, Senior Airman Nicholas Eischen set a courageous example for all Californians. Maria and I are deeply saddened by his loss and we will keep his family and friends in our thoughts and prayers. Nicholas' noble character will be deeply missed by all who knew him."

Eischen, 24, died Dec. 24 in a non-combat related incident in Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. Eischen was assigned to the 60th Medical Operations Squadron, United States Air Force, Travis Air Force Base, CA.

In honor of Senior Airman Eischen, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



12/26/07

Gov. Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Salinas Soldier: Pfc. George J. Howell

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Pfc. George J. Howell, of Salinas, CA:

"Private First Class George Howell fulfilled a valiant duty to our country, serving in the United States Army. George will be fondly remembered for his dedication to protecting freedom overseas. Maria and I will continue to pray for the comfort of his family, friends and fellow soldiers, who are mourning this tragic loss."

Howell, 24, died Dec. 21 as a result of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device in Riyadh, Iraq attacked his vehicle. Howell was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Infantry Division (Light Infantry), United States Army, Fort Drum, NY.

In honor of Pfc. Howell, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



12/14/07

Gov. Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Fallbrook Sailor: Chief Petty Officer Mark T. Carter

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Chief Petty Officer Mark T. Carter, of Fallbrook, CA:

"Our hearts go out to Chief Petty Officer Mark Carter's family as they grieve the loss of their precious loved one. Maria and I wish to express our sympathies to Mark's family, friends and fellow service members who served alongside him. The tremendous service and sacrifice he made for our country will be forever remembered by all Californians."

Carter, 27, died Dec. 11 as a result of enemy action while conducting combat operations in Iraq. Carter was permanently assigned as an East Coast-based Navy SEAL, United States Navy.

In honor of Chief Petty Officer Carter, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



11/20/07

Governor Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Riverside Air Force Staff Sergeant: Staff Sgt. Alejandro Ayala

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Staff Sgt. Alejandro Ayala, of Riverside, CA:

"Maria and I are terribly saddened by the loss of Staff Sergeant Alejandro Ayala. He served our country with courage and honor, characteristics that define the members of our nation's brave armed forces. We extend our continued prayers to Alejandro's family and friends as they mourn a cherished loved one."

Ayala, 26, died Nov. 18 of injuries sustained as a result of a vehicle accident in Kuwait. Ayala was assigned to the 90th Logistics Readiness Squadron, United States Air Force, F.E. Warren Air Force Base, WY. The cause of the accident is under investigation.

In honor of Staff Sgt. Ayala, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



11/15/07

Governor Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Eureka Soldier: Cpl. Peter W. Schmidt

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Cpl. Peter W. Schmidt, of Eureka, CA:

"Maria and I join all Californians in mourning the loss of Corporal Peter Schmidt. Peter joins a proud legacy of heroes who fought for their country and gave their lives to protect their fellow Americans. Our prayers are with his family and friends during this difficult time."

Schmidt, 30, died Nov. 13 of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated during dismounted combat operations in Mukhisa, Iraq. Schmidt was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, United States Army, Fort Lewis, WA.

In honor of Cpl. Schmidt, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



11/14/07

Governor Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Walnut Creek Soldier: Spc. Sean K.A. Langevin

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Spc. Sean K.A. Langevin, of Walnut Creek, CA:

"Specialist Langevin committed himself to protecting our country. Maria and I extend our heartfelt condolences to Sean's family, friends and fellow soldiers who served courageously beside him. His honorable sacrifice will not be forgotten."

Langevin, 23, died Nov. 9 as a result of wounds sustained when his patrol was attacked by direct fire from enemy forces in Aranus, Afghanistan. Langevin was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 503rd Airborne Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, United States Army, Vicenza, Italy.

In honor of Spc. Langevin, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



11/14/07

Governor Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Torrance Soldier: Spc. Lester G. Roque

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Spc. Lester G. Roque, of Torrance, CA:

"Words cannot adequately convey our sincere appreciation for Specialist Roque's service. Lester's heroic sacrifice is an inspiration to all Californians. Maria and I extend our deepest condolences to his family during their time of mourning."

Roque, 23, died Nov. 10 as a result of wounds sustained when his patrol was attacked by direct fire from enemy forces in Aranus, Afghanistan. Roque was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 503rd Airborne Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, United States Army, Vicenza, Italy.

In honor of Spc. Roque, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



11/14/07

Governor Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Torrance Soldier: 1st Lt. Matthew C.

Ferrara

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of 1st Lt. Matthew C. Ferrara, of Torrance, CA:

"First Lieutenant Matthew Ferrara made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting our nation abroad. Matthew's tremendous courage and bravery will always be remembered. Maria and I pray for the comfort of his family, friends and fellow soldiers during this painful time."

Ferrara, 24, died Nov. 9 of wounds sustained when his patrol was attacked by direct fire from enemy forces in Aranus, Afghanistan. Ferrara was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 503rd Airborne Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, United States Army, Vicenza, Italy.

In honor of 1st Lt. Ferrara, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.



11/14/07

Governor Schwarzenegger Issues Statement on Death of Bridgeport Marine: Sgt. Phillip A. Bocks

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today released the following statement regarding the death of Sgt. Phillip A. Bocks, of Troy, MI:

"Sergeant Phillip Bocks honorably served our nation with bravery and selflessness while preserving freedom and democracy for his fellow citizens. Maria and I send our deepest condolences and continued prayers to Phillip's family, friends and fellow Marines for their loss. We are forever grateful for his dedication as a member of our nation's armed forces."

Bocks, 28, died Nov. 9 while conducting combat operations in Aranus, Afghanistan. Bocks was assigned to the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center, United States Marine Corps, Bridgeport, CA.

In honor of Sgt. Bocks, Capitol flags will be flown at half-staff.

Note to editors: This Veterans News and previous CDVA news releases, advisories, and newsletters are available on our website at www.cdva.ca.gov and via email from Jaime.Arteaga@cdva.ca.gov.